

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMCONSUL, Lagos, Nigeria

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF : -

SUBJECT: Fortnightly Newsletter May 5

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Political

The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons has been conducting a very active campaign against the Action Group in the Western Provinces with the purpose of cutting down the lead which the latter political party has gained in that region. The various groups of followers of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe have been touring from community to community in the Western Provinces attacking the Action Group program with great violence. It is almost impossible to judge the success of the NCNC campaign since reports are from Dr. Azikiwe's controlled "West African Pilot" and the Action Group's controlled "Daily Service" and "Nigerian Tribune". The publication of news and comments in these organs of the Press has practically ceased and all the three sheets are devoting their space to accusations and counter accusations of a political nature. It is understood that Prince Adeleke Adedoyin, a member of the Legislative Council of Nigeria and a follower of Dr. Azikiwe was stoned by crowds in Ikorodu, a community several miles to the north of Lagos.

One serious responsible local informant in a position to know something of the political scene has stated that Dr. Azikiwe's position in the political life of Nigeria is at a very low ebb. The reporting officer feels that the informant exaggerates when he states that Dr. Azikiwe is finished, but there can be no doubt that Dr. Azikiwe no longer possesses the leading position to which he had become accustomed in the past. He is, however, making every attempt to regain it.

Mr. H. O. Davies, formerly a leading member of the Nigerian Youth Movement and the Area Council in Lagos, has announced the formation of a new party of the Nigerian People's Congress which appears to be associated with the NCNC. It is too early to predict if this party has any influence but it would appear that all important political leaders in the West must already be associated with the other groups. It is also too early to say if this party will attract any large following. If unsuccessful it appears certain that it will move into the NCNC.

EDCrowley:ea0

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PREPARATION TIME

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The Nigerian Government issued regulations on May 17, 1951 for the conduct of the elections in the Eastern Provinces. The preparation for elections in the Eastern Provinces is much more advanced than in other Provinces. The electoral procedure will vary between each region.

The primary voter's list at Aba in the Eastern Region has been completed and the results of this list are of some interest as apparently only a small proportion of the qualified voters took pains to register and the Government is trying to encourage further additions to the list.

Economic

Rains have been generally deficient during the last two months and some of the crops are being damaged by drought. The main rainy season which means so much success to the Nigerian agriculture is just beginning and it will be another month before any estimate can be given as to the possible size of 1951-1952 crops.

The most recent announced report of the Colonial Development Corporation is being given great publicity particularly that part which relates to the Mokwa Agricultural Project. One fact which was revealed which is of great interest is that by the end of 1950, 5,003 acres had been cleared, but only 2,219 acres were cropped owing to the rapid regrowth of bush. This problem has been encountered in other African projects and does not offer a favorable outlook for extensive farming in Nigeria. This is particularly true when one considers that the environment at Mokwa makes possible close supervision of the native farmers. It is not likely that agriculture can be organized over a wide area with the necessary supervision to insure that land is not allowed to grow over once it is cleared.

Details have just been issued on another rice project at Shemankar in the Plateau Province. For the moment this is an experiment but it is hoped that it can be expanded. This year only a little over 100 acres will be cultivated with the assistance of 3 tractors, 5 ploughs and 3 harrows. The harvest for last year was 700 - 2,818 lbs. of such rice per acre. Furthering its efforts in the production and consumption of rice with a view to reducing food prices, the Nigerian Government is importing several thousand tons of rice to be dumped on the market at reasonable prices.

The Nigerian Government had devoted considerable publicity to the report of the American Cocoa Research Institute on "Cocoa Prospects in Nigeria". The most recent statistic issued on the

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purchases of cocoa on the 1950-1951 season shows a probable export crop of at least 110,000 long tons.

It has been announced that the new Elder Dempster Lines' mail boat "Aureol" is scheduled to leave Liverpool on November 8, 1951 on its maiden voyage and arrive in Lagos on November 21, 1951. This addition to the service should help to ease the shortage of passengers space between West Africa and the United Kingdom.

The British Overseas Airways Corporation has added one extra Hermes aircraft to its London-West Africa service weekly. This will insure daily United Kingdom- West Africa service.

The British Government has announced the appointment of a Trade Commissioner for West Africa, who will be stationed in Lagos.

Other

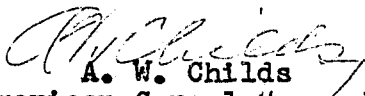
A very serious theater fire in Kano recently caused the death of 318 attendants and the injury of several hundred others.

Dr. S. L. A. Manuwa, Director of Medical Services and Sir Kofoworola Abayomi are leaving Nigeria to attend a medical conference in Dakar.

Sir Frank Whittle, the British jet aircraft specialist, is in Nigeria instructing local Nigerian aviation personnel in jet operation.

Administration

Vice Consul Lewis D. Junior and Mrs. Eva Hayes arrived in Lagos on May 17, 1951. This addition to the staff of the Consulate General will relieve a very serious personnel shortage which has existed for sometime.


A. W. Childs
American Consul General

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